

Claims 1-30 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and 30 are the independent claims.

Claims 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-24, 29, and 30 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found at least at, for example, page 14, line 17 through page 15, line 7 of the specification as originally filed. No new matter has been added

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,621,429 (Yonezawa). Claims 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 21, 25, 27, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Yonezawa in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,621,429 (Yamaashi, et al.). Claims 7, 14, 21, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Yonezawa. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claims 1 and 15 recite, inter alia, notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of images by a reception means while the reception means is receiving the images. Independent Claims 8 and 22 recite a similar feature in method form while independent Claims 29 and 30 recite a similar feature in storage medium form.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Yonezawa nor Yamaashi, et al., alone or in combination, assuming, arguendo, that the documents could be combined, discloses or suggests at least the above-discussed claimed feature as recited, inter alia, in independent Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and 30. Thus, the asserted citations do not anticipate these claims.

Yonezawa teaches that a video transmission terminal 20 returns resultant data representing the state of a video camera 10 to a monitoring terminal 60. The

monitoring terminal, in turn, displays the state of the associated video camera on a bitmap display 135. (Yonezawa, Col. 3, line 65 - Col. 4, line 3). However, the state of the video camera 10 is information such as “panning/tilting and zooming” of the video camera. (Yonezawa, Col. 4, lines 48-49; Col. 6, lines 4-5). Thus, the resultant data returned to the monitoring terminal comprises information such as “panning/tilting and zooming” of the video camera.

Applicants understand the Office to have taken the position that the state of receiving video from the video camera is being notified of a state of reception. (Advisory Action mailed September 30, 2002, pages 2 and 3). Applicants respectfully disagree. Nonetheless, Applicants submit that Yonezawa does not teach or suggest at least the aforementioned feature regarding acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of amended independent Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and 30.

The secondary citation, Yamaashi, et al., relates to a video data display controlling method and video data display processing system in which the display quality of an image is dynamically changed in accordance with the degree of user interest in each image area so as to make the total capacity of data transfer match the total capacity of the communications path. (Yamaashi, et al., Col. 9, lines 48-56). In the Yamaashi, et al. system, an image with a high degree of user interest is displayed finely (i.e., at high resolution) and an image having a low degree of interest is displayed roughly (i.e., at low resolution). (Yamaashi, et al., Col. 7, lines 24-38). Further, the display quality may be automatically set in accordance with a user degree of interest or may be manually set by the interface displayed by video data display controller 205. (Yamaashi, et al., Col. 9, line 58- Col. 10, line 14). However, absent from Yamaashi, et al. is any teaching or suggestion

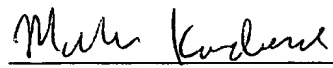
of the aforementioned feature of independent Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and 30 --namely, acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution of the images by the reception means while the reception means is receiving the images. Thus, Applicants submit that Yamaashi, et al. adds nothing to the Yonezawa's teachings that would remedy the above-mentioned deficiencies.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the independent claims patentably define the present application over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the same reasons as the base claim for which they depend and further due to the additional features that they recite. Separate and individual consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that this Amendment After Final Rejection clearly places the subject application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicant believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the instant Amendment as an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A communication apparatus comprising:
reception means for receiving images generated from a plurality of
communication terminals;
output means for outputting the images received by said reception
means in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images; and
notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of
distribution [reception] of the images by said reception means while said reception means
is receiving the images.

2. (Amended) A communication apparatus according to Claim 1,
wherein the state of distribution [reception] is information relating to a frame rate of an
image being received by said reception means.

3. (Amended) A communication apparatus according to Claim 1,
wherein said notification means changes the display unit in accordance with the state of
distribution [reception] by said reception means.

8. (Twice Amended) A communication method comprising the steps of:

receiving images generated from a plurality of communication terminals;

outputting the received images in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images; and

acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution [reception] of the images in said receiving step while performing said receiving step.

9. (Amended) A communication method according to Claim 8, wherein the state of distribution [reception] is information relating to a frame rate of an image being received.

10. (Amended) A communication method according to Claim 8, wherein said acquiring and notifying step changes the display unit in accordance with the state of distribution [reception].

15. (Twice Amended) A communication apparatus comprising:
reception means for receiving a part or all of images generated from image generation units of a plurality of corresponding communication terminals by switching the images;

output means for outputting the images received by said reception means in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images;

assigning means for assigning an arbitrary image from among the multiple images;

control means for controlling a state of outputting of the image assigned by said assigning means; and

notification means for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution [reception] of the images by said reception means while said reception means is receiving the images.

16. (Amended) A communication apparatus according to Claim 15, wherein the state of distribution [reception] is information relating to a frame rate of an image being received by said reception means.

17. (Amended) A communication apparatus according to Claim 15, wherein said notification means changes the display unit in accordance with the state of distribution [reception] by said reception means.

22. (Twice Amended) A communication method comprising the steps of:

receiving a part or all of images generated from image generation units of a plurality of corresponding communication terminals by switching the images;

outputting the received images in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images;

assigning an arbitrary image from among the multiple images;

controlling a state of outputting of the assigned image; and

acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution [reception] of the images in said receiving step while performing said reception step.

23. (Amended) A communication method according to Claim 22, wherein the state of distribution [reception] is information relating to a frame rate of an image being received.

24. (Amended) A communication method according Claim 22, wherein said acquiring and notifying step changes the display unit in accordance with the state of distribution [reception].

29. (Twice Amended) A storage medium storing a program, said program comprising:

- reception process code for receiving images generated from a plurality of communication terminals;
- output process code for outputting the received images in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images; and
- notification process code for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution [reception] of the images by said reception process code while said reception process code is receiving the images.

30. (Twice Amended) A storage medium storing a program, said program comprising:

- reception process code for receiving a part or all of images generated from image generation units of a plurality of corresponding communication terminals by switching the images;
- an output process code for outputting the received images in order to display the images on a display unit as multiple images;
- an assigning process code for assigning an arbitrary image from among the multiple images;
- control process code of controlling a state for outputting of the assigned image; and

notification process code for acquiring and notifying of a state of distribution [reception] of the images by said reception process code while said reception process code is receiving the images.

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